S. No.	Country	Dates of Visit	Purpose and Achievements
24.	Burkina Faso	02—04 November, '95	The Prime Minister's visit was intended to demonstrate India's interest in strengthening relations in that region. A Trade Agreement and Memorandum of understanding on railway cooperation were signed in Burkino Faso.
25.	Argentina	05—07 November, '95	Prime Minister visited Argentina to attend the 5th G-15 Summit.
26.	Ghana	08—09 November, '95	During the visit bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest were discussed. Indian assistance was offered in the fields of agriculture, small scale industries, tourism, telecommunication and transport to Ghana. An agreement was signed for setting up a Joint Commission with the objective of further enhancing and diversifying the already existing multifaceted bilateral relationship.

[English]

Licences to Blood Banks

3839. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any final decision has been taken by the Government to set up committees to simplify the process of issuing licences to Blood Banks in various States; and

(b) the steps taken by the Government to ensure ready availability of blood in major and other Hospitals across the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) A procedure for expeditious approval of grant/ renewal of licences includes joint inspection by the State and Central authorities with a view to disposing applications in a time bound manner, has been recently introduced.

(b) The Govt. have been organising campaigns to educate the masses through mass media, one-to-one communication etc., to increase voluntary donation of blood. Under the National AIDS Control Programme currently under implementation, all the blood banks run by Govt. are being modernised and have been receiving cash and commodity assistance.

Agreement between CPT and PAB

3840. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state

(a) whether his Ministry has ratified the land-mark sister-port agreement between the Calcutta Port Trust (CPT) and the Port Authority of Bordeaux (PAB) in France;

(b) the extent to which the sister-port pact is likely to assist the Calcutta Port authorities in increasing the navigable depths of the Hooghly, and the nature of style-chart and style-dredge systems, as envisaged in the agreement;

(c) whether the CPT has since received feedback from the PAB on the technical modalities of the agreement; and

(d) if so, the salient features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The use of Syle charts and Syle Dredge systems will improve the present Hydrographic survey system in Calcutta Port. Syle Chart systems are basically automatic data logging facilities which will produce survey charts very quickly after actual sounding of the depth in the river and Syle Dredge system is basically a dredge monitor which will help in optimising dredging operations and exercising effective control on dredging.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Stagnation in Units of Ordnance Factories

3841. SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ex-servicemen, who joined in early 80's in different units of Ordnance Factories Board, have been stagnating in the same post for the last 16-17 years;